



REL Southeast
Director's Email

April 2023

Greetings from the REL Southeast,

Competency-based education (CBE) is an approach to teaching and learning that focuses on mastery of specific skills and knowledge rather than traditional measures of academic progress such as time spent in a classroom or grades earned on tests. CBE can help support student achievement by providing a personalized, clear, and flexible approach that promotes real-world application. Social and emotional learning (SEL) helps students develop the necessary skills to succeed in a CBE environment by focusing on building social and emotional competencies including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These skills help students develop their ability to communicate effectively, manage their emotions, build positive relationships, and make responsible choices.¹

This month, REL Southeast would like to encourage practitioners to learn more about CBE and SEL by exploring resources the Institute of Education Sciences has produced around these topics. We hope you find these materials informative and useful, and as always, thank you for helping to improve educational outcomes for every student in our region.

With gratitude,

Dr. Nicole Patton Terry
Director, REL Southeast

¹ Kendziora, K., & Yoder, N. (2016). *When Districts Support and Integrate Social and Emotional Learning (SEL): Findings from an Ongoing Evaluation of Districtwide Implementation of SEL*. Education Policy Center at American Institutes for Research. <http://educationpolicy.air.org/>



North Carolina Competency-Based Education Partnership

This blog post from [REL Southeast](#) defines CBE as a personalized learning model and describes the work being conducted by the [North Carolina Competency-Based Education Partnership](#) around the topic.



Competency-Based Education Framework Series

CBE Defined

In this video, we share the North Carolina Research Alliance's definition of Competency-Based Education (CBE) and an overview of the CBE Mastery Framework. The video also identifies the benefits of CBE over the traditional model, including increased flexibility, improved engagement of students, more authentic assessments and grades, and student ownership of the learning process. This video will appeal to anyone who is interested in getting a general understanding for what CBE is and the benefits of the model.

[Click here to watch the video.](#)

CBE Structure

This video highlights the role of administrators at the state, district, and school levels in putting elements in place that allow for CBE implementation. State, district, and school administrators tend to have the most control over the structure elements that cultivate and promote CBE, from employing an appropriate learning management system to creating a conducive school schedule. This video also features administrators who are implementing CBE.

[Click here to watch the video.](#)

CBE Culture

School leaders play a key role in setting the vision and creating the culture within a school. This video features school principals who have shifted their school's grading practices from a traditional letter-grade system to a CBE mastery-based grading protocol to understand how key cultural elements were addressed.

[Click here to watch the video.](#)

CBE Learning


A foundational concept of CBE is a student-centered approach to learning. This video contains conversations with students at various grade levels who have taken ownership of their learning and begun to advocate for their learning within a CBE classroom.

[Click here to watch the video.](#)

CBE Teaching

Instruction in a CBE environment focuses on each student's ability, learning style, and learning pace and shifts from teaching to facilitating. This video focuses on the elements contained within the teaching dimension, including teachers as facilitators or coaches, personalized learning, tools and resources for teaching, content expertise, curriculum design, and assessment design and use.

[Click here to watch the video.](#)

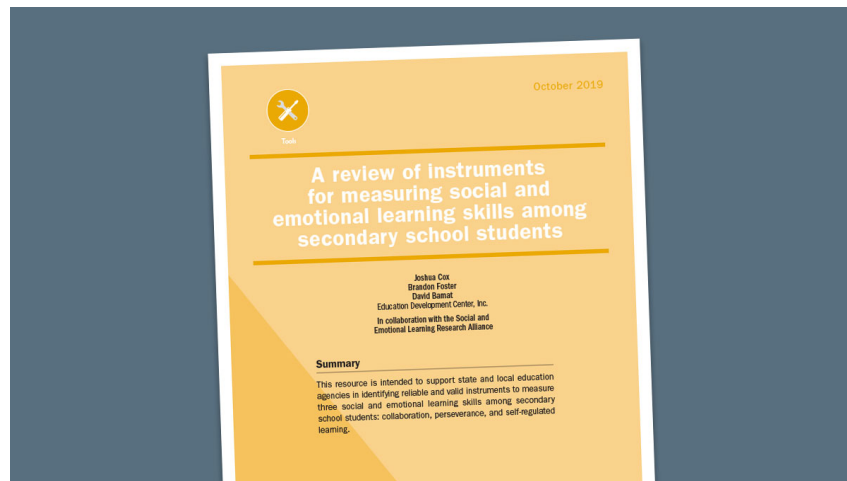


Structure	Culture	Teaching	Learning
Assessment System	Institutional Mission	Teachers as Facilitators/ Coaches	Student Ownership of Learning
Seat Time	Knowledgeable Staff	Personalized Learning	Student Voice
Learning Management System	Culture of Innovation	Tools/Resources for Teaching	Lead Learner
Scheduling	Engaged Parents/Families	Content Expertise	Learning Anytime, Anywhere
Standards / Defined competencies	Engaged Stakeholders	Curriculum Design	
Professional Development	Effective Communications	Assessment Design and Use	
Physical Infrastructure	Culture of Relevance		

Competency-Based Education Mastery Framework

The CBE Mastery Framework defines key components within an authentic CBE environment across the dimensions of Structure, Culture, Teaching, and Learning.

[Click here to explore the framework.](#)



A Review of Instruments for Measuring Social and Emotional Learning Skills Among Secondary School Students

This resource, developed by the [Regional Education Laboratory Northeast & Islands](#) in collaboration with its Social and Emotional Learning Alliance, presents social and emotional learning instruments and the reliability and validity information available for those instruments. Specifically, this resource indicates whether psychometric information was available for reliability and seven components of validity--content, substantive, structural, external, generalizability, consequential, and fairness.

[Click here to explore the tool.](#)



A Review of the Literature on Social and Emotional Learning for Students Ages 3–8: Characteristics of Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs

This four-part series of related reports examines what is known about social and emotional learning (SEL) programs for students ages 3-8. The report series addresses four issues raised by the [REL Mid-Atlantic](#) Early Childhood Education Research Alliance: characteristics of effective SEL programs (part 1), implementation strategies and state and district policies that support SEL programming (part 2), teacher and classroom strategies that contribute to social and emotional learning (part 3), and outcomes of social and emotional learning among different student populations and settings (part 4) and identifies key components of effective SEL programs and offers guidance on selecting programs.

[Click here to explore the series.](#)



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